Anno Domini 1611.

A 437

CONFESSION

AND PROTESTATION OF THE FAITH OF CERTAINE CHRISTIANS

in England, holding it necessary to observe & keepe all Christes true substantiall Ordinances for his Church visible and Politicall (that is, indued with power of outward spirituall Government) under the Gospel; though these doe differ from the common order of the Land.

Published for the clearing of the said Christians from the slander of Sedition, and Novelties, and also of Separation, & undutifulnes to the Magistrate, which they falsly charge them doe falsely fasten upon them.

Also an humble Petition to the K. Majestie for Toleration therein.

Coloss. 2. 6.

As ye have received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walke ye in him.

Psalm. 116. 9.

I will walke before the Lord in the land of the living. I believed, therefore have I spoken: for I was sore troubled.

Vide, & Fide.
Fide, sed Vide.

A CONFESSION AND PROtestation of the faith of certain Christiãs *in England, holding it necessary to observe &* keepe all Christes true substantial Ordinances, for his Church visible and politicall (that is indued with power of outward spirituall Government) under the Gospell; though the same doe differ from the common orders of the Land.

Published for the clearing of the sayd *Christians from the slaunder of Schisme and Noveltie, and also of Separation, and vndutifulnes to the Magistrate, which their rash Adversaries doe falsly cast upon them.*

WEe, who do beleeve & profess it to be necessary both for the glory of Christ, & for the assurance of our owne soules, to observe and keep Christs substantial Ordinances for his visible politicall Church (which are wanting publiquely among us, & yet are both his clear commandements, and also special meanes

of salvation, and of Gods worship for us under the Gospell) doe judge it most fit and reasonable to publish and testifie to
1. all men in all plainenes, wherein particularly we doe consent, and doe fully agree with the publique Churches in Englād.
2. And wherein we disagree and differ frō
3. the doctrine publiquely received. And also finally to shew the inforcing reasons that hane driven & compelled us to take this way which wee doe.

1. Touching the first of these, we protest before God and men that we unfaynedly and hartily agree to all the civil authoritie, Magistracie, and Government as it is received and standeth by law established in the Land, holding it a most high offence against Almighty God, if any of us should not with all readines & cōscience at all times submit in all things (either actively, or passively) thereunto.

Moreover wee doe likewise protest, that we refuse not on occasion to communicate with the publique ordinary Congregations assembled for the exercise of religion in England: viz. where neyther

neyther our assent, nor silent presence is given to any meere humane tradition. And we agree willingly to all the articles of faith and religion publiquely received and mainteyned among us: onely excepting those points which hereafter folow mentioned, and are distinctly set down in the particular Articles of this our present Confession and Protestation.

2. Then touching the second thing above mentioned, that is, our difference and disagrement from the doctrine received publiquely in this land, thus we declare and testify in the presence of God and men, that meerely being constrayned by the cleare and unresistable evidence of Christs gospell, (which sayth *wee ought rather to obey God then men) and not moved by any other conceite, or vaine fancie, we differ and disagree from the sayd publique doctrine, in Eight and Twentie severall Articles, all of them being of very great importance, yea most of them both substantial matters in Religion, and also speciall meanes of salvation under the Gospell.

* Act. 5.29.

28. Articles.

The Articles, wherein onely wee dissent from the publique Ecclesiasticall order, and doctrine in England.

1. Of Christs offices; namely his Propheticall and Kingly offices.
2. Of the alsufficiencie of the Scripture.
3. Of Christs true visible Church generally.
4. Of Christes true visible politicall church in more speciall manner.
5. Of Synods and Councells.
6. Of a Catholike or Universall Church politike, that is indued with power of outward spirituall government.
7. Of a Provinciall Church independent.
8. How true visible politike churches are in England.
9. Of L. Archbishops, and L. Bishops Diocesan and Provinciall.
10. Of the making of Ministers.
11. Of our Communicating with the parish

Parish Ministers & Parishes in England.

12. Touching Pluralitie Pastors, and Non residents.

13. Touching Discipline and Censures.

14. Touching the number of Pastors in each Church: and of the Pastors ordinary power and authority in managing the Churches spirituall affaires and government.

15. Touching the prophane and scandalous Mixtures of people in the Congregation.

16. Of humane Traditions.

17. Of traditions Apostolike.

18. Of Prophecy.

19. Of reading of Homilies in the Church.

20. Of Christs descending into Hell.

21. Of Prayer.

22. Of Holy dayes so called.

23. Of Mariage and Burying, & churching, as it is called.

24. Of Ministers made also Magistrates by the State.

25. Of the gifts and Offerings of the

faithfull.

26. Of Tithes and the Paſtors fitteſt and due, and neceſſarie maintenance.

27. Of the civill Magiſtrates duety & charge ſupreamly to overſee and order his Churches ſpirituall matters, yet but civilly.

28 Touching the neceſſity that lyeth upon us (notwithſtāding) to obey Chriſt rather then man, (when they differ) in our uſing the true, and refuſing the contrary eccleſiaſticall ordinances above ſpecified.

Of Chriſts Offices, namely his Prophetical and Kingly Offices.

1. Wee beleeve Chriſts Prophetical, and Kingly Offices even in outward ſpirituall (or religious) matters to be abſolute and perfect. Where note that wee underſtand outward ſpirituall matters (or religious) to be outward matters uſed in the exerciſe of Religion, not for any naturall reaſon, nor for any civill uſe, but meere voluntarily; that is, ſuch things therein, as are of the authors meere voluntary

mitary appointing. And though some persons opposing against us, do account these any thing rather, thē Spirituall matters; yet surely we hold them to be spirituall and religious seeing they are voluntarie institutions vsed onely in and for the exercise of religion, and are appropriated thereunto. Also these outward matters (we believe) are spirituall and religious unlawfully and falsely, which are of mens institution: they are lawfully, justly, and truely such, which are of the institution, and appointing of Iesus Christ. Againe where these men doe say, They neither intend, nor teach these things to be spirituall or religious. We answer, that maketh not the matter. They are such in the very nature of the thinges, notwithstanding. For mens wordes or intents make not the nature of these things, neither can they alter the same. Men indeed make these things in the exercise of religion false, and unlawfull, in as much as they come meerely frō men. But spirituall and religious they are of themselves, viz. being simply voluntarie

ordinances appropriated to the affaires of Religion, as they are. In the appointing therefore of theſe outward ſpirituall matters (and religious) we believe (as is ſayd) thoſe offices of Chriſt to be moſt abſolute, and perfect. Indeed ſo perfect in every ſuch particular now, ſo alſufficient, and ſo neceſſary to be ſubmitted unto of all Chriſtians, as the ſayd offices of Chriſt were under the Law. We believe that Chriſt in theſe things (no leſſe then in mattets inward concerning religion) is the foundation to the whole building even of his viſible and politicall Church now under the Goſpell, as well and as throughly as he was under the Law, appointed by God over all things (yea all theſe things) as the head to his ſayd Church which is the fulneſſe of him that filleth all in all things. And ſo wee believe Chriſt our Mediator (in the kinde, and nature of his offices) to be not changed (much leſſe diminiſhed) but altogether the ſame unto us now, as he was heretofore to his people the Iewes; as it is written. † Ieſus Chriſt the ſonne yeſter day,

† *Heb.* 13. 8. *Act.* 3. 23. *Luc.* 19. 14. 27. *Mat.* 21. 43.

terday, to day, and for ever. Yea we are perſwaded, if we ſhould believe otherwiſe, we ſhould rob Chriſt of his honour and give his glorie to others; which is a part of the higheſt ſacriledge that can be. And therefore where in this Article we are cõtradicted by ſome, who ſay plainely that Chriſt in the Goſpell though he bee the Prophet, King and Prieſt to his Church, yet he is not the onely, or abſolute Teacher, Inſtitutor, King, and Lawgiver, of his outward Church, nor of the viſible adminiſtration thereof, and namely not in the forerehearſed outward thinges: And likewiſe that Chriſtians now have libertie and free choyce for the ſaide outward thinges in the exerciſe of Religion, till mans Authority do determine them; and that then ſuch outward things are neceſſary to be obſerved, but not otherwiſe. This we cannot conſent unto: but we renounce it, as highly derogating from the true, and due offices, and honour of Chriſt, as is above ſhewed.

1 *The Approvers of Gabriel Powell de Adiaph. &c.*

2. Wee believe the holy Scriptures Allsufficiencie even in the sayd outward matters spirituall, now likewise, as well as it was believed and professed by all the faithfull under the Law. And for that reason we hold this sense (which indeed was and is the onely true sense) of the 2. commandement, viz. that (touching the generall matter thereof, or generally) it containeth onely in the exercise of Religion free and voluntary Ordinances (that is) having no cause for their sayd use neither in civility, nor in naturall Reason; but the meere will of the Author of them. Yea we believe, that such ordinances both outward, and inward, private and publique doe wholly make the 2. commandement, both in the affirmitive and Negative part. They against us abroade in the land hold not this sense of the 2. cómandement, but deny it. As likewise (with like dishonour to Christ, which wee noted before, and with no lesse disgrace to his word) they deny the Allsufficiency

a Doct. Whig. in pref. against T. C. saith, it is a rotten principle.

ſciency of holy Scripture in the ſaid outward pointes (as we believe) of faith & Chriſtian Religion, and moſt materiall and weightie under the Goſpell. They call them circumſtances & Accidents to Gods worſhip. But moſt unjuſtly. The Scripture indeed ſerveth not to ſpecifie circumſtances, or Accidents. Wee willingly agree to this. Neither did it ſo at any time. As namely not under the Law. But we deny this conſtantly (being therein well aſſured) our matters in controverſie are not circumſtances, nor Accidents in Gods worſhip: And therefore alſo not indifferent. A circumſtance is, which of it ſelfe and by the very nature of it hath ſometime, and to ſome perſons a helpfull, a profitable, and needfull uſe of Gods worſhip, yet is not any part of Gods worſhip, nor perpetually fit, nor meerely voluntarie, nor uſed onely therein. An accident is, which being no way a part of Gods worſhip is ſometime in it, ſometime not. A matter ſubſtantiall in the worſhip of God (and that which is a part of it) is of 3. ſortes. *Either* a thing not

A circumſtance.

An Accident.

sacrificium

not Civill, but properly pertaining to Gods worship, and yet a meere voluntarie ordinance therein. *Or* a thing having absolute neceſſitie in nature and naturall reaſon to be a part of Gods worſhip. *Or* otherwiſe which by the Scripture is plainly commanded or forbidden in Gods worſhip. Our matters in controverſie are all ſubſtantiall, of one of theſe 3. later ſortes, & namely of the firſt. And therefore what ſoever of them is lawfull muſt be commended to us in the Scripture. Elſe they are all unlawfull, ſinnefull, and wicked. The ſeverall pointes we ſhall here preſently note in particular (at leaſt) namely theſe which follow.

Of Chriſtes true viſible Church generally.

3. Wee believe that (for more cleare underſtanding) Chriſts true Church is to be noted, and conſidered 4. wayes. *First* Chriſt hath a true Church * Inviſible, which is the Univerſal number of his elect. *Secondly*, He hath a Church Militant

* *Epheſ.* 3. 15. *Heb.* 12. 23.

Militant considered meerely as it is † profeſſing, and ſuffering; that is, as the ſeverall members doe profeſſe the true faith, and doe endure the oppoſition of enemies for the ſame. *Thirdly*, the church is taken for a Chriſtian family ſo well nurtured and ordered in Religion, that they are * like unto a litle Church. So a Church is figuratively, and metaphorically taken. But none of all theſe is to our purpoſe. *Fourthly*, The Church is taken as the ſame ‖ is politicall, or indued with power of outward ſpirituall policie, and adminiſtration of Gods holy ordinances, the meanes of ſalvation for mens ſoules. Now this Church under the Goſpell (and with this conſideration) is that which onely we doe here treat of, ſeeke, and deſire. And wee believe that the ſpeciall forme of this, that is, Chriſts viſible politicall Church under the Goſpell, and the particular kinde of Government thereof muſt be of divine Inſtitution, they are matters ordinarily neceſſary to Saluation, & they are matters of faith, matters of the 2. commandement, no

† Gal. 1. 13. Philip. 3. 6.

* 1 Cor. 16. 19. Bez. Annotat. ibid.

‖ Math. 18. 17. 1 Cor. 5. 12. 13. Act. 2. 26.

leſſe

lesse then they were under the Law. Wee believe that these things are no circumstances, nor Accidents, nor Indifferent, nor at all changeable by the discretion of men. But we believe that these are matters of Substance in Religion: and that by these things one visible politicall Church differeth essentially or substantially from another; to wit, in the nature, and kinde of the outward spirituall Administration thereof. As namely the Iewes visible politicall Church under the Lawe, did substantially differ from the Christian visible politicall Churches under the Gospell. And rather the proper Diocesan, and Provinciall and Catholike Churches since Christ doe so differ from the churches which are but ordinary Congregations independent. Moreover Laying on of handes (*Heb. 6. 2.*) set for the forme of making Ministers under the Gospell, is counted one of the six foūdations & principles of faith there rehearsed. Which then requireth that also the whole outward spirituall administration, and government of Christes

Church

[illegible] now must be such; yea and the forme it selfe of the visible politicall Church must then be a foundation of Religion, a principle of christian faith, ordinarily necessary, & for ever unchangeable by men. Wee doe not here think that all who of simplicitie doe erre in this foundation and principle of faith are of necessitie damned. We are not of so rigid, and severe an opinion. But we therefore hold it as a foundation and principle of faith, because it is ordinarily necessarie to salvation, and for ever unchangeable by men. Thus standeth our faith in these pointes: so that they which hold contrarily, to wit, that these things are but circumstances in Religion, & accidents, ordayneable, and changeable by men, even from one forme to another, doe (as we believe) erre greatly from the trueth.

Of Christs true visible politicall Church in more speciall manner.

4. Wee believe that the nature & essence of Christs true visible (that is, po-

liticall) Church under the Gospell is a free congregation of Christians for the service of God, or a true spirituall bodie politike cõteyning no more ordinary Cõgregations but one, and that independent. Wherein chiefly 2. pointes are
1. to be noted. First, that a true visible politicall Church under the Gospell is but one ordinary Congregation: And this is to be seene plainely in these scriptures. *Math.18.17. & 1 Cor.5.4.12.13. & 1 Cor. 11.18.20. & 1 Cor.14.23. Againe Act.1.15. Act.2.1.44. Act.6.2.3.5.6. & Act.15.22.25. Also Act.14.27. & Act.15.30. Moreover Act. 20. 28. & Act.14.23. Gal.1.2.21. & 2 Cor. 8.1. & Rom.16.1. &c.*

2. The second point here to be noted is, That by Gods ordinance, this one ordinary congregation of Christians is a spirituall bodie politike; and so it is a free congregation independent. That is, It hath from God the right and power of spirituall Administration, and Government in it selfe, and over it selfe by the common and free consent of the people independently, and immediately under Christ,

Christ, alwayes in the best order they can. Which these places doe prove. *Mat. 18. 17. 19. & 1 Cor. 5. 12. 13. & 10. 15. & 7. 23. & 2 Cor. 2. 8. & 2 Thes. 3. 6. 14. Act. 6. 3. 5. 6. & Act. 14. 23. Act. 1. 23. 26. Act. 15. 22. 25. & 1 Thes. 5. 21. & 1 Ioh. 4. 1. Rom. 16. 17. Coll. 4. 17. 2. & 3 Io. 10. Gal. 1. 9. Gal. 5. 1. Gal. 4. 26.*

of Synods, and Councells.

5. Howbeit we acknowledge with all, that there may be, and that on occasion there ought to be on earth a consociatiō of Congregations or Churches, namely by way of Synods: but not a subordination, or surely not a subjection of the congregations under any higher spirituall authoritie absolute, save onely Christs, and the holy Scriptures. They who deny this, mainteyning a Dioceſan and Provinciall (and neither wee nor they themselves know what universall) visible politicall Church both proper and representative, doe herein vary farr from the rule of the Gospell.

Of a Catholike, or Vniverſall Church politike, that is, indued with power of outward ſpirituall Government.

6. It is demanded, doe wee deny an Univerſall viſible Church under the Goſpell? Wee anſwer, yea. Under the Goſpell Chriſt never inſtituted, nor had any one Univerſall viſible Church (that is Politicall) either proper, or repreſentative; which ordinarily was to exerciſe ſpirituall outward government, over all perſons through the world profeſſing Chriſtianity. No ſuch Church (ſay wee) is found in all the new Teſtament. Therefore we now cannot acknowledge any ſuch.

Of a Provinciall Church independent.

7. It is marveyled, why we likewiſe deny, that under the Goſpell there is any true viſible politicall Church, Provinciall or Dioceſan; ſeing ſo we ſhall deny a true viſible politicall Church to be now in England, becauſe the Engliſh Church

(as

(as commonly it is holden) is properly a Dioceſan and Provinciall, or a Nationall viſible politicall Church. We anſwere, For our parts we acknowledge there are many true viſible, yea politicall Churches in England in ſome degree, & in ſome reſpect: yet in deed we deny alſo a Nationall, a Provinciall, & Dioceſan Church under the Goſpell, to be a true viſible politicall Church (whether wee meane the whole body, or the repreſentative part of ſuch Churches) though the publike practiſe among us, doth hould them for true politicall Churches. The reaſon why wee deny theſe alſo, is, Becauſe neither any ſuch is found any where ſet downe in Gods word of the new Teſtament, even like as there is no Univerſall Church viſible politicall there ſet downe. But onely a free Congregation, or ordinary Aſſembly is found in the new Teſtament, as a litle before is ſhewed.

How true viſible politike Churches are in England.

8. And touching the true viſible po-

liticall Churches which we acknowledge are in England, wee profeſſe and declare in this manner. Namely that each company of true viſible Chriſtians aſſociated togither in one place (viz. a Pariſh) and profeſſing to ſerve God according to his will, in faith and order ſo farr as they knowe (ſuch as there are many in England) the ſame is a true viſible politicall Church in ſome reſpect; that is, Though not in reſpect of the order of the ſtate (unleſs indirectly and by accident to it) after which they walke, and under which they ſtand in ſpirituall bondage: yet in Chriſt directly they are free, And ſo directly and eſſentially they are a true politicall Church, as they are a company of true viſible Chriſtians united by their owne conſent to ſerve God, as a litle before is noted. And thus they have free power of ſpirituall outward governmẽt among themſelves, though they profeſſedly practiſe it not. But (eſteeming them by Gods word in their direct practiſe & ſtate according to the publike proceedings, they are not a true politicall

Church

Church, nor free (directly) as they ſtand under and joyned to the L. Biſhops ſpirituall dominion over them. Which bondage and want of ſpirituall freedome in themſelves our godly people generally ſee not: nor this, That (in right from Chriſt) they have this freedome to be exempted from the unlawfull domination of the L. Biſhops aforeſayd. Neither think they ſo upon this matter as they ought, and as the perill of their ſoules requireth. Howbeit, yet all this (as ‡ we judge) doth not ſimply diſanull that peoples being true viſible Chriſtians with us (ſo long as herein they erre but of ignorance) nor the aſſemblies from being true viſible politicall Churches in ſome reſpect and degree, as before is ſhewed. And therefore we cõmunicate alſo with them on occaſion, as before likewiſe is ſignified; viz. while in ſuch communicating wee countenance out no evill thing in them, which in many places, and many times we need not doe. Whereof we ſhall preſently ſee further in *Art.11.* following.

‡ *Prov.* 25. 18. & 17. 15.

Of L. Archbiſhops, and L. Biſhops Dioceſan, and Provinciall.

9. Wee believe, that the ſpirituall office, calling, and power, and adminiſtration of L. Archbiſhops, and L. Biſhops, Dioceſan and Provinciall, with their inferior Hierarchy, is contrary to the Eccleſiaſticall order, & ordinance of Chriſt eſtabliſhed in the new Teſtament, and not to be communicated with. The prooſes whereof doe ſtand on the groũds of the 4. Article before, and on thoſe in the 10. Article next following after.

† 1 *Theſ.* 5.21. *Rom.* 16.17. 1 *Ioh.* 4. 1. *Act.* 14. 23. *Act.* 6. 3.5. *Act.* 1. 23.26. 2 *Cor.* 1.24. 1 *Pet.* 5.3. 1 *Cor.* 7. 23. 1. *Cor.* 3. 22. *Math.* 18. 17. 19. & 28. 20.

Of the making of Miniſters.

10. Wee believe, that the eſſence of Miniſters calling under the Goſpell, is the † Congregations conſent. We ſpeake of the ordinary Miniſteric, eſpecially of Paſtors. And it is proved thus. Whatſoever is eſſentiall in making of a Miniſter, at ſome time, and in ſome place, the ſame is eſſentiall ever. But the Congregations

gations conſent is eſſentiall at ſometime, and in ſome place. This is without queſtion; viz. in ſome places it was, when Chriſtians came firſt out of the Antichriſtian tyranny & bondage of Rome; Alſo as it may happen it is now, and may be hereafter in like caſes. And alſo in the firſt converſion of the Indies, and other infidell Countries. Which even our Adverſaries (as they muſt needes) doe confeſſe. Therefore the Congregations conſent is eſſentiall ever, and every where in the making of a Miniſter. Many there are by whome this concluſion is denyed; They hold the authority and conſent of a former Miniſter, to be eſſentiall to the making of a Miniſter: And ſo they derive & hold the Miniſtery of the Church of Chriſt with us, to come (as touching the eſſence thereof) ſucceedingly from Antichriſt the Pope of Rome. Indeed there are but onely theſe 2. wayes (neither can be) to make Miniſters to us eſſentially: And therefore in truth we conclude a Miniſters calling is eſſentially alwayes from the Congregations conſent.

For any lawfull authority herein from
* 2 Cor. 5.16.16 the Pope, we acknowledge * none. And with all upon this ground, Wee (for our partes) cannot but believe it to be ſimply unlawfull, and ſinfull to fetch, receive, yea or to uſe a Miniſtery formerly received from the Prelates: ſeing that hereby (and eſpecially by the expreſſe opinion that the Miniſtery of England deſcendeth from the Pope) beſide the mainteyning of Romes pride, the foreſhewed order of God, and the † Churches true right ſpirituall is moſt plainely violated and defaced, yea and (as we doubt) our perſons moſt deeply indangered of our lives by the ‡ Lawes verdicte in the rigor thereof. Becauſe the Soveraigne abſolutenes and independency of our Land and Countrey in ſpirituall things is greatly impaired, abaſed, and diminiſhed thereby, to ſay no more of it. Finally upon this ground we alſo believe, that a Miniſter (ſo reputed) without any particular flocke, is indeed no Miniſter,

† As before in the beginning of this Artic.

‡ Eliz. 27.2.

T. C. pl. 1. 1.

1. Firſt, we believe that to think we doe, or can receive a Miniſtery eſſentially from a former † Miniſter or Prelate (in theſe dayes) is an errour, and the thing received is a nullitie in that reſpect. † *Hebr.* 7.7.

2. Secondly, this receipt in a Pariſh miniſter with us maketh not a nullitie of the Miniſterie in him in every reſpect beſides; that is, it maketh not voyd all truenes of Miniſtery in him, as a believing Congregation (howſoever) conſenteth to have him, and uſeth him, for their Miniſter. This conſent of the godly there (howſoever it be mingled otherwiſe with errour) is not wholly voyd.

3. Thirdly, concerning us, when on ſome weightie occaſion we joyne onely to that which is true in the ſayd Miniſtery, and teſtify in the beſt manner we can that ſo we doe, alſo ordinarily leaving the pariſh congregation and Miniſterie for that their errour, and other ſuch like; and with all profeſſing, publiſhing, and practiſing

using freely and constantly the simple truth therein with our selves, this quitteth us (as we firmely believe) and sufficiently maketh us cleare from all evill, and appearance of evill in this matter.

Lastly, It being no evill nor any appearance of evill justly in us, to joyne to the Parish Congregation and Ministerie in such respect, and so farr forth onely, as is aforesayd; we ought (as we believe) sometime on waightie occasion so to joyne, and † we sinne if we doe not.

† *Luk.* 17.37. *Heb.* 10.25. 1 *Cor.* 10.32.

Touching Plurality Pastors, and Nonresidents.

12. We believe Plurality-Pastors, and Nonresidents to be directly contrary to the order of God in the Gospell; And therefore that now they are simply unlawfull; and likewise deputed, and substituted Pastors by private authority, such as our Curates are. And meere Lecturers are little better.

Touching Discipline and Censures.

13. Wee believe the true administring of

of the holy Censures to be by the Congregations consent also. And therefore not to be lawfully done by an absolute Diocesan or Provinciall authority; that is, if it be without any necessary concurrence of consent of that Congregation, which it chiefly concerneth.

Touching the number of Pastors in each Church: & of the Pastors ordinary power & authoritie in managing the Churches spirituall affaires & Government.

14. Wee believe each Church ought to have one Pastor at least: and that they may have moe then one, if the number of the Church, and their meanes be fitt for it, and such plenty of choice may be had. Howbeit we judge that it is best, and most agreable to the last Apostolike practise, that even where many are, yet that one have (during life) a precedencie and prioritie in order and place (not in power) before the rest. *Revel. 2. 1. &c.*

Touching

Touching their power and authority in Church government, we believe (whether they be in each Church single, or moe then one) they have all that they have, and nothing more, then what the Congregation doth commit unto them, and which they may (when need requireth) againe take away from them; Yea to their utter deposing, and also rejection out of the Church it selfe, if such necessitie be. Howbeit otherwise while they are approved and stand in their place, we judge each proper Pastor may and ought to be trusted by the Congregation with the managing of all points of their Ecclesiasticall affaires and government so farr, that he with his assistants (when he hath any) doe execute and administer the same: yet so, that in matters of waight the whole Congregation doe first understand thereof before any thing be finished, and the finall act be done in the presence of the whole Congregation, and also that they (the sayd Congregation) doe not manifestly dissent there from.

Touching

15. Wee believe concerning mixtures of the open prophane with ſome manifeſt godly Chriſtians, in a viſible Church, though at once it doth not deſtroy eſſentially, nor make void the holines of that whole Aſſembly, yet truely it putteth that whole Aſſembly into a moſt dangerous and deſperate eſtate by ſuch their confuſion, and by ſuch extreame perill of further infection, eſpecially if they doe long tolerate the ſame among them. Inſomuch that what ſoule ſoever in ſuch a Church ſtate deſireth to be in ſafety, ought with all diligence to leave that ſpirituall ſocietie wherein he ſtandeth thus, and joyne to a better: Seing under the Goſpell there are more free ſocieties of Chriſtians, mo viſible Churches politike, then one in a Country, and ſome more ſincere then ſome: And all true Chriſtians are cõmanded of God to keepe their owne ſoules ſound and cleare from contagion,

tagion, which is unpoſſible to be done ordinarily for any long time, where the viſible Churches conſtitution is ſo commingled of bad and good, of open prophane and godly togither: for who can carry fire in his boſome, and his clothes not be burnt? And who can touch pitch, and not be defiled therewith? And who can eſcape, but (in a while) a litle Leaven, will leaven the whole lump, much more will it ſo come to paſſe, where there is a great quantitie of Leavé for a litle Dowe, as now with us it is, wherefore in ſuch an inevitable preſent danger of our ſoules, doubtleſſe we ought to leave the worſe ſocietie, and to enjoy one that is & may be ſincere. For by no meanes may we dare to be of [1] no viſible Miniſteriall Church, if but 2. or 3. where we live, can be gotten to conſent and joyne togeither in the name of Chriſt, and in the freedome of Gods word.

[1] *Eph.* 2.12.

Of Traditions humane.

16. Wee believe all Eccleſiaſticall unwritten

written Traditions and Ordinances of men (being no circumstances nor accidents) are (now under the Gospell, even like as they were under the Law) untruthes, and false positions, and errors in the worship of God. And that simply we ought not to be present in the practising of them, unlesse we might conveniently reprove the same. Wee much mislike therefore those who hould (at least) some such to be now in these times both tolerable and profitable in Gods worship. Nay; we believe all Ordinances freely and voluntarily instituted in the exercise of religion to be indeed (and so to be rightly named) Gods worship either true or false, being (as they are) the proper matter, contents, and parts of the second cõmandement in the decalogue; which also before is signified in the secõd Article. This doctrine they who admit not, doe erre not a little even in the very nature and definition it selfe of the sayd worship of God, and in the kindes and parts thereof; we meane of Gods instituted worship. Some particulars of these

unwritten Traditions are, *a Catholike Church politike, a Provinciall politike church independent*: the proper *Offices* of their government, and the *Forme and parts* thereof. Beſide, theſe alſo are: *The* Cope, and *Surplice*; *the* Croſſe *in Baptiſme*, *Kneeling in the* Communion; and the like. All which being in Gods worſhip, and pertinent to it in ſpeciall wiſe, and meerely of mens voluntary inſtitution, we therefore renounce and doe utterly condemne as mens inventions ſpirituall, and will worſhip.

Of Traditions Apoſtolike.

17. We believe that every ordinance or inſtitution Apoſtolike (and that muſt unto us out of holy Scripture be proved to be ſo) is divine; that is to ſay, of divine Authority, inſtituted of God, ſimply unchangeable by men, and ſuch, that of right it ought to be uſed perpetually, & univerſally among Chriſtians, unleſſe God himſelfe (by his owne worke) doe let it, and make it voide. They therefore

doe

doe erre much who hould, that it is rightfully in the Churches power to alter and take away ſome thing (which hath been of ſpirituall and eccleſiaſticall uſe) appointed by the very Apoſtles, and that mentioned in the holy Scripture: And they alſo erre no leſſe, who ſay that ſomething truely Apoſtolike may be proved ſo to be by Traditions onely, without Scripture.

Of Propheſie, as the Apoſtle calleth it.

18. Wee believe that the ſober, diſcreet, orderly, and well governed exerciſe of expounding and applying the Scriptures in the Congregation, by the Apoſtle called Propheſying, & allowed expreſſly by him to any underſtanding member of the Church (but * women) is lawfull now, convenient, profitable, yea ſometime very neceſſary alſo in diverſe reſpectes; The Churches order and allowance therein for each particular perſon ſo imployed, being firſt had. For it being lawfull privately by † private motion:

* 1 Cor. 14. 34. & v. 1. 39. and verſ. 31.

† 1 Theſſ. 5. 11. 1 Pet. 4. 10.

on: it must needs be more lawfull in publike, when it is seene needfull by the Church, and is performed under the Churches order, direction, and judgement.

Of the reading of Homilies in the Church.

19. Wee believe that with us the reading of Homilies in divine service is not lawfull, but very unmeete for the congregation of the faithfull: namely where it is held for competent without the imployment of a preaching Pastor; where as a Pastors diligent, discreet, and judicious preaching, and applying of Gods word, is the power of God unto salvatiō ordinarily. Neither doth every of the allowed Homilies in every pointe conteyne godly doctrine.

Of Christs descending into Hell.

20. After the usuall and cōmon sense of this English word Hell, we believe that in

in the Creed this point is not rightly translated, where it is sayd, Christ (being dead) descended into Hell. For the Scripture sayth onely (and so likewise doe the originall words in the Creed signify) that he was then under the power of death. And was in the place, where all other the godly deceased were; And that is all.

Of Prayer.

21. Wee believe concerning prayer: that though every † forme of prayer prescribed by men be not absolutely nor simply a sinne, neither (as we judge) an Idol, nor an invention of man, nor a transgression of the 2. commandement; yet wee constantly avouch and professe a prescribed Leiturgy, or a booke of common prayer by cõmandement inforced upon a whole Church rightly constituted, to be used still in the very same words whensoever they assemble (in comparison of other praying) is not so profitable but rather hurtfull in many users of it,

† 2 *Chrô.* 29. 30. *Psalm.* 102. & 92. *Mat.* 26. 30.

as making holy zeale, true piety, sincere godlynes, and other giftes of Gods Spirit in many of them to languish, namely where it is made necessary, and in perpetuall use, and when it is so long, as that the reading of it over, taketh up the whole time fit for one usuall meeting to divine service. And therefore we cannot think it any way cõvenient for our selves, nor meete to be imposed, or to be so received in any well constituted Churches: much lesse, to be imposed on a whole nation, least of all, upon all Churches of the world. The new Testament teacheth no such matter, neither troubleth it selfe with indeavouring an uniformity in this point, but leaveth all Churches herein to their godly liberty, wisedome, understanding, and diligent consideration of themselves. Besides such prescribed Leiturges were never used (in any maner) among Christians, till late after Christ. The soonest was after 300. yeares. And to be short, by experience wee see too oft, most evidently they breed both an idle Pastor, & an ignorant, & secure people.

Therefore

therefore to follow herein the Christian liberty, and discretion of the Churches, in the Apostles times, we hold it to be best.

Of Holy dayes, so called.

22. Wee believe that under the Gospell there is not any holy day, (besides the Lords day) not any fasting day, or dayes constant, ordinary, and on certaine seasons, or times of the yeare continually to be observed. All such observing of dayes we believe is against Gods word, not onely as being religious ordinances † instituted by men (never thought on by Christ nor his Apostles in all their time, who yet had the Holy Ghost leading them into ‡ all truth meete for Christian people, and had more reason to institute them then wee) but also as being directly forbidden in the 4. Commandement where God saying to man, ‖ *Six dayes thou shalt labour, and doe all that thou hast to doe,* he sayth there also, *but rest the Seaventh,* for so did God himselfe after the 6. dayes creation;

† *Matth.* 15. 9. 13

‡ *Joh* 4. 25. & 14 26. & 16. 13.

‖ *Exod.* 20. 9.

creation; whoſe example herein do thou follow. Now this Divine appointmẽt of a Seventh day onely to be kept holy, wee plainely ſee to be (for the equity, & proportion, which is the ſubſtance ther. of) a very Commandment of God unto us ſtill: And therefore of all men to be perpetually obſerved. Howbeit if God or the Apoſtles had ordeyned (beſide a 7. day) any other holy dayes particularly in the Goſpell, as God and his Prophets elſe where in the Law did ordeyne ſome beſides the Sabbath, then (notwithſtanding this Commandement) we would never refuſe ſuch holy dayes now, over and beſides the Lords day. But that in the Goſpell was not done; the Goſpell no where ſheweth any ſuch matter. Therefore we believe it not, we cannot now but refuſe it. And yet againe, Dayes of thankſgiving, or faſting, which by men are appointed upon ſome ſpeciall occaſion, and are to be uſed accordingly; that is, for the ſayd ſpeciall, and particular occaſions ſake, and onely for a ſeaſon convenient and fitting thereunto (but in no

wiſe

constantly, and continuingly, as is afore noted) such dayes, I say, we approve and allow, as having warrant from the Spirit of God both in the Law and in the Gospell. But other then these, we neyther believe, nor allow any.

Of Mariage, & Burying, & Churching, as it is called.

23. Concerning making of mariage, and burying the dead, we believe that they are no actions of a Church Minister (because they are no actions spirituall) but civill. Neither are Ministers called to any such busines: Neither is there so much as one example of any such practise in the whole book of God either under the Law, or under the Gospell, without which warrant we believe it to be unlawfull whatsoever any Minister doth attempt at any time, or in any place, especially as a part of his ministeriall office, and function. Wherefore we professe and protest, that we earnestly desire that the Solemnization of holy Mariage might

be performed by some Civill Magistrate assigned by highest authoritie thereunto. And when Ministers doe in the Congregations solemnize Mariage, we testify that we believe that they doe nothing therein, neither can, but blesse this ordinance of God; as likewise they doe some time the initiation of a Magistrate, they doe not essentially constitute either of them. And for Churching of women, likewise we know no ground for it in Scripture, nor good reason at all, specially to make it a necessary part of the Ministers office in the publike divine service.

Of Ministers made also Magistrates by the State.

24. Wee believe that the joyning of Pastorall ministery, and Magistracy together in one person under the Gospell is simply unlawfull, and contrary to the Text of the new Testament, which sayeth, *It shall not be so among you, Mat. 20. 25. Luke 22. 26.* And: *Let him that teacheth wait on Teaching, &c. Rom. 12. 7.*

25. We believe that there is a holy Communion of the whole Church in communicating of their substance together by gifts, and offerings.

These gifts and offerings are given to God; they are Gods properly and specially belonging to God; he taketh them for his: also they are given to that particular Church of God, for which the givers doe intend them. † *Numb.* 18.2. 18.8. *Malach.* 3.8.9.

They are not meere almes, but (first) evident signes of true love to God: then, they are necessary meanes and duties required by God for the supportation, maintenance, and upholding of the sayd Church, and of the sincere worship of God therein.

These gifts and offering are meerely free and voluntary; yea every time the giver commeth to God with them. ‡ *Prov.* 3.9.

These gifts and offerings are * reall sacrifices to God, and partes of his holy worship and service. Also, after they 2 *Sam.* 24.24. 1 *Chron.* 16.29.

are given and receiued they are holy and
8 Levit. consecrated things, not goods for 8 com-
27. 26. mon secular use.
29. Exod. 13. These gifts are some ordinary, & some
13. extraordinary.
Deut. 15.19. The time of offering these ordinary
giftes is every Lords day. The most fitt,
and comely season and place for it is in
the holy Assembly, then when the
Churches use is to performe it.

Neverthelesse they who are on just
occasion any such day absent, ought all-
wayes to lay aside for God and for his
service their portion, or rather Gods
parte, and portion: and in due time to
bring, or send it. Which is no lesse sanc-
tifyed to the foresayd holy use, and ac-
ceptable to God, then if the givers then
had been present.

These gifts though they be free and
voluntary in the givers touching the par-
ticular quantitie; yet that they doe thus
give & offer every Lords day somewhat
9 1 Cor. (either more, or lesse) is † a very com-
16.2. mandment of God, and a fruit of neces-
2 Cor. 9. 7. sary obedience in man.

The

The quantitie is thus farre pointed at in the Scripture, viz. According as the Lord hath prospered every one. And some are in high grace with God, who give to God out of their penurie.

The persons, who are to give these holy giftes, are all and every member of the Church, except onely those that receive maintenance therefrom at the hand of the Church. So that all the Churches members are givers, or receivers.

They that receive are the Poore, and the Ministers of the Church.

Extraordinary offerings and giftes (which some out of speciall Zeale to Gods glory doe offer besides the ordinary) are for the place, time, kinde, and quantitie such as each giver seeth God may be the more honoured thereby.

The ordinary offerings in the assembly are to be received by the Deacons, committed into the hands of the Elders, and with their direction to be disposed of by the Deacons. 1 *Act.* 11. 30. *Numb.* 18. 8.

The Cõmandment of the Apostle to the Church of Corinth. *1 Cor. 16. 1. 2.* 14.

Concerning

Cōcerning the gathering for the Saincts, as he ordeyned in the Churches of Galatia alſo, viz. Every firſt day of the weeke let every one put aſide by himſelf, and lay up as God hath proſpered him. This ſhewing what the Apoſtle then required of thē for an occaſionall reliefe of other brethren farr off from them, doth ſhew more that he requireth them thus to doe for their owne conſtant, ordinary, and neceſſary ſupportation, & maintenance.

Of Tithes, & the Paſtors fittest, and due, and neceſſary maintenance.

26. Wee believe that Tithes for the Paſtors maintenance under the Goſpell are not the juſt and due meanes thereof. Howbeit yet we doe not think theſe Tithes abſolutely unlawfull, if they remaine voluntary: but when they are made neccſſary, we think them not ſo lawfull. The ſame doe we judge alſo of whatſoever other ſet maintenance for miniſters of the Goſpell eſtabliſhed by temporall Lawes. We graunt, for the Miniſ-

ters

ſecurity ſuch eſtabliſhed maintenãce is beſt: but for preſerving due freedome in the Congregation, ſincerity in Religion, and ſanctity in the whole flock, the Congregations voluntary & conſcionable contribution for their Paſtors ſuſtenance, and maintenance is doubtleſs the ſafeſt, and moſt approved, nay it ſeemeth, the onely way: wherewith the Apoſtles cauſed their times to be content: neither did they take care for other order herein: which certainely they would, and ſhould have done, if other order had been better. Onely they are carefull (and that very religiouſly) commanding all Churches of conſcience and duety to God to give (not ſparingly, but liberally, and not as almes, but as duety) for the upholding, advancing, and countenancing of the holy worſhip, and ſervice of God, which is either much ſtrengthened, or weakened, much honoured, or abaſed amongſt men, according as the Paſtors maintenance is. To this end tendeth that which is written: † *Who goeth a warfare at any time on his owne coſt? Thou ſhalt*

† 1 Cor. 9.7.9. 11. 14.

ſhalt not muzzel the mouth of the Oxe that treadeth out the Corne; If wee have ſowne unto you ſpirituall things, is it a great thing, if wee reap your carnal things? God hath ordeyned that they which preach the Goſpell ſhould live of the Goſpel: or elſe a people (herein negligent) * robbeth & ſpoileth their God, will a man ſpoile his God? Wherfore †honour the Lord with your ſubſtance, and with the firſt fruites of all your increaſe; and ‖let him that is taught in the word, make him, that taught him, partaker of all his goods. Alſo every one as hee ſoweth, † ſo hee ſhall reape; And ‡ none may appeare before the Lord emptie. By all which it is manifeſt, that Almighty God commandeth the people to mainteyn with their goods their miniſters. And (in the Goſpell) their maintenance to be free; yet honeſt, liberall, and plentifull: that * they may be incouraged in the way of the Lord.

* *Mal.* 3. 8. 9.
† *Prov.* 3. 9.
‖ *Gal.* 6. 6.
† *v.* 7.
‡ *Deut.* 16. 16.
* 2 *Chro.* 31. 4.

Of the civil Magiſtrates duety, and charge to overſee and order his Churches in ſpirituall matters.

27. Wee

29. Wee believe that wee, and all true visible Churches ought to be overseene, and kept in good order, and peace, & ought to be governed (under Christ) both supreamely, and also subordinately by the Civill Magistrate: yea in causes of religion when need is. By which rightfull power of his, he ought to cherish & preferre the godly, and religious; and to punish (as truth, and right shall require) the untractable, and unreasonable. Howbeit yet alwayes but Civilly. And therefore we from our hart most humblie doe desire that our gracious soveraigne King would (himselfe so farr as he seeth good, and further by some substituted † civill Magistrate under him) in clemency take this speciall oversight, and government of us, to whose ordering and protection wee most humbly commit our selves, acknowledging that becawse we want the use of this divine ordinance, That therefore most greate, and infinite evills both to us, and even to the whole kingdome doth ensue, and also becawse of the spirituall Lords their governmēt over us.

† *Supplicat. for Tolerat. p. 8. 12.*

And notwithstáding the spirituall Lords
‡ *Ibid. pag. 12.* ‡ doe think it injury and wrong to themselves not small, if the King should substitute civill Magistrates to this busines, yet (as it is sayd) that is Gods owne ordinance; and to doe otherwise, namely to commit either spirituall or civill government (viz. Diocesan, or provinciall) to Ministers of the word, is evill; and (as we believe) a direct transgression of the text of the Gospell above rehearsed, in Artic. 4. 10. 24.

Touching the necessity, that lyeth upon us to obey Christ rather then man in our using of the true, and in refusing the contrary ecclesiasticall ordinances above specified.

28. Wee believe that by the word of God all Christians are bound (each one for his own part) to keepe & observe actually, and perpetually the Affirmative ecclesiasticall Commandements, and ordinances in the Gospell, as well as the Negative:

Negative: That is, ſo farre as one perſon ſufficeth to performe the ſame, ſingly & by himſelfe he ought ſo to doe; & where ſome number are required (& are ready) for the obſerving of any ſuch Commandement, there each chriſtian (which can be preſent with other) ſtandeth bound to give his conſent, & to make one with them therein. Alwayes after the beſt order they can, and namely that maine order which is in the Goſpell: notwithſtanding whatſoever mans forbidding, or whatſoever affliction in the world ſhould followe upon it.

But that, touching the uſe of Chriſts viſible politicall Church under the Goſpell, viz. A free independēt cōgregatiō (preſcribed in *Mat. 18. 17.*) is ſuch an Affirmative Cōmandmēt & Ordinance; and it agreeth to that order afore named, as wee ſee in the Scriptures alleaged for the 2. point in the 4. Article. *Mat.* 18. 17.

Therefore every Chriſtian is bound by Gods word to keepe and obſerve the ſame perpetually, ſo as is before declared.

And namely this all are commanded (occaſió requiring) viz. to tell ſuch a Church, and to heare ſuch a Church. Therefore all are commanded and ſtand bound by Gods word (ſo as before is declared) perpetually to have ſuch a Church, and to be members of it firſt.

* *Mat.* 28. 20. † 1 *Theſ.* 5. 21. ‡ 1 *Joh.* 4. 1. ‖ *Rom.* 16. 17.

Further all ſimply are cõmanded * to doe whatſoever Chriſt commanded the Apoſtles, and to † try all things, and to hold faſt that which is good. And to ‡ try the ſpirites whether they be of God. And, ‖ brethren marke them diligently which cauſe deſſentions and offences beſides the doctrine which yee have learned, and avoid them. Theſe duties we may very well doe according to that true order above noted, if we enjoy ſuch a viſible Church (a free Congregation) as is before deſcribed: But wanting ſuch a Church, it is not poſſible for us to doe them with any good order, as is ſhewed. Therefore we all are ſimply commanded to enjoy and uſe an independent Church exerciſing ſpirituall government (a free Congregation) according as is before deſcribed;

described; that we may obey God and keepe his Commandement given us in these places of Scripture. Which we ought to doe.

Likewise * all are cõmanded to stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and not to be intangled in the yoake of bondage. Out of such a visible Church (a free Congregation) we cannot possibly observe and keepe this generall Commandement orderly & ordinarily); but in it we may. Therefore here we are commanded also to be actually in such a visible Church, a free Congregation, and to use the same. * Gal. 5. 1.

Againe all are commanded † to stand fast, and to keep the Apostles Traditions and Ordinances. But this forme of a visible Church is one maine, and substantiall Apostolike Ordinance. Therefore we are all cõmanded to observe & keepe it, namely so as before is declared. † 2 Thes. 3. 15.

Againe all are commanded to ‡ obey their Pastors, to follow their faith, to make much of such, to ' seeke first the Kingdome of God; to " make our calling, ‡ Heb. 13 17 7 1 Thes. 5. 12. ' Math. 6. 33. " 2 Pet. 1. 10.

ling, and election ſure, (viz.) by walking in the true outward way; To obſerve the 2. Commandement in all the parts of it, a maine part whereof under the Goſpell is this forme of a viſible Church, and government.

Laſtly this ordinance of Chriſt we ought to hold and keep moſt firmely, whoſoever gainſay it, becauſe in this eſ-
Pſalm. tate of a Church, the † promiſes of God
33.3. are given and received; and no where elſe
Pſ 134. directly and ordinarily. And there is no
3. Eph. promiſe to any indirect and accidentall
3.12. conſtitution of a Church. Wherefore this direct and ordinary meanes of hope, and faith of grace and ſalvation we ought to preferre before our life. Remembring
Luk. alſo that * willingly to refuſe and omitt
9. 27. the ſame, is no leſſe then damnation to any man.

Thus then in all theſe ſo waighty points we are clecrely cõmãded to obey God rather thẽ man. And God cõmanding us to feare, & to love, and to ſerve him, he cõmandeth us the neceſſary meanes, & way of doing ſo, even that Church, in and by which

which ordinarily wee muſt doe ſo, that wee may be accepted. Which (under the Goſpell) is ſuch a free Congregatiõ, as is † before made cleare. Where we ſee that this onely is now Chriſts true viſible Church, and no other forme of a viſible Church is. Wherefore we are all bound with all care to hearken to the expreſſe precept of the Holy Ghoſt concerning even this point, ſaying, ‡ *This is the way walke yee in it.* Which alſo the Harmony of Confeſſions teacheth, viz. That this we ought to doe notwithſtanding men of power and might ſhall ſay nay.

† *In Artic. 4.*

‡ *Iſa. 30. 21.*

1 Harm. of Conf. French Artic. 26. Dutch. Artic. 28. Helvet. ch. 11.

These (with the branches depending on them) are our differences, even all the matters wherein we diſſent from the uſuall and common opinion among us in this Land.

Now therefore (to come to the 3. and laſt point of this our Proteſtation) wee demaund and doe earneſtly crave of every indifferent chriſtian to anſwere us: what falſe things have wee here affirmed? What on our part is evill? What

is wicked in all this? If nothing, as we are firmely perſwaded in our ſoules that there is nothing; Then we pray, and earneſtly intreate (in the bowells of mercy in Ieſus Chriſt) every one to pardon our Conſciences, in that thus doing wee ſtand to give actuall obedience to our Heavenly Lord and Saviour in his owne Commandements, and Ordinances: which alſo wee doe, that we may thereby (as by the onely true complete meanes) † 1 Ioh. 3. 18. 19. get † aſſurance of ſalvation to our ſoules, which otherwiſe we for our parts cannot finde. And otherwiſe (whilſt wee omitt thus to doe, and keepe not Chriſts ſayd Cõmandements) any with reproch may ſay unto us, *ſhew us your faith by your workes, through workes is faith made perfect: But faith without workes is dead.* And Chriſt ſayth, *If yee love mee*, then *keep my Commandements*. And, *Not he, that ſaith, Lord, Lord, But he that doeth the will of the Father is juſtified.* Whence verily wee ſee it plaine, and we know well, that not the talkers, nor diſputers of Chriſts will, but the doers ſhal be ſaved, (yea though men

afflicte them for it;) and they that will have Christ to raigne over them; not they, that will not. * L 19.

Wherefore we humbly pray every upright harted servant of God to consider, that it is not possible for us (knowing that which we know) to give this forerehearsed due obedience unto Christ, but by walking in this way, which wee doe. Which also cannot be but first by eschewing the evill, and then by doing the good. That is; first by renouncing to be ordinary and constant members of any Diocesan, or Provinciall Church visible politicall, (Because the forme of these is wholly without Gods word in the Gospell, yea contrary to it.) And then also of the Parishes (as naturall parts) depending on them, and on their Lord Bishops; seeing these likewise doe both want Gods word, and add to it, & stand in bondage in those the above noted substantiall pointes, and meanes most importunt to salvation, which before have been declared. Wherefore thus farr forth onely wee leave our sayd parishes also:

but no further. That is, to be in them no ordinary and constant members: but members in them occasionally we refuse not to be, seing in them we finde (in many places) very many true visible christians, with whom we cannot (as we believe) deny publike communion absolutely, and therefore on occasion we offer to communicate with our sayd publike congregations (or parishes) as before we have professed; taking God to witnes that this we doe (not through any pride, or singularity, but) meerely out of necessitie of our duetie to obey Christ in his word; (as we believe that herein we doe) and to submitt unto his word, and ordeyned meanes, & to keepe his commandements, and to avoide abiding in sinne; which otherwise possibly we cannot see how wee can avoyd. Yea againe, and againe we testify that being forced meerely by conscience, thus wee do, not knowing otherwise in our soules, how to answere it at the last day. Where we know no Magistrate, nor Prince shall be able to answere for us, if after the

Light manifeſted we be found ſtanding in a wrong way contrary to Chriſtes ſacred Ordinance, as we believe this Dioceſan politicall Church is.

Secondly hence it is, that we do joyne (each perſon onely himſelfe) humbly, and obediently to the evident way of the Goſpell, the moſt certayne true Churcheſtate ſet downe in the New Teſtament by Chriſt, and his Apoſtles, namely, to a free Congregation. Which truthes before (ſpecially in the 4th. Article) wee have ſufficiently ſhewed; binding our ſelves to proceede ſimply, and onely by this ſure rule, and therein to perſevere untill death: or elſe (when wee ſwerve) we acknowledge our ſelves juſtly worthy of the fearfull Cenſure of *Excommunication* from that holy ſociety of Chriſtians, whereinto by Gods mercy we are now entered, wherewithall wee acknowledge our ſelves alſo worthily excluded from the ſpirituall Communion of Gods people wholly, and every where, till wee returne by *Repentance*.

Wee ſay the feare of God conſtrayn-

eth

eth us hereunto: seing we cannot otherwise finde in our hearts cleerely the safety of our soules; a matter above all things in this world, which wee, and all people ought to have greatest regard of.

All glory be to God on high, and in earth peace, & goodwill towards man. The grace of our Lord Iesus Christ be with us all. *Amen.*

Ier. 32. 39.

One way and one heart.

Cypr. de Vnit. Eccles.

Credere se in Christum quomodo dicet, qui non facit, quod Christus facere præcepit.

How can one say, he believeth in Christ, who doth not that which Christ commandeth.

Caluin. Instit. 4. 3. 2.

Ecclesiæ dissipationem, vel ruinam potiùs, & exitium molitur, quisquis ordinem hunc, de quo disputamus, & HOC GENVS regiminis vel abotêre studet, vel quasi minus necessarium éleuat.

Hee laboureth the ruine, and destruction of the Church whosoever he be, that endeavoreth to abolish this order, and THIS KIND of Government whereof wee treate, or maketh light of it as lesse necessary.

AN

HVMBLE PE-TITION TO THE KINGS MOST *EXCELLENT MAIESTIE, BY THE* Christians notified in the fore-rehearsed Confession and Protestation, (his Majesties ever faithfull Subjects) that of his good & mercifull disposition it would please him to give them Toleration and peace under him in their serving of God according to their sayd Confession and Protestation.

GIve thy judgments to the King, ô God, & thy righteousnes to the Kings Sonne.
Psalm. 72. 1.

MOst gracious Soveraigne, your loyall and dutifull Subjects notified in the forerehearsed Confession and Protestation of their faith, being well assured and

and firmely beleiving that this intent of theirs is honeſt, righteous, godly, charitable, and of neceſſarie importance to their ſoules health, yet being alſo in moſt greivous dangers, & heavy perplexities, ready every howre to be drawne into moſt miſerable diſtreſſes and calamities, for this their conſcience and obedience to Gods word, have their recourſe to your Sacred Majeſtie their onely hope in earth, and to you (as they ought to doe) they make their ſute in moſt humble manner on their bended knees. Beſeeching you (as in effect they formerly did, ſo now againe) to give unto them this favour, that peaceably and quietly they may worſhip God and ſerve him in your Highnes dominions where they dwell, after the tenour of their Confeſſion and Proteſtatiō here before expreſſed. Their enemies are rigorous and ſharpe in laying affliction on them (onely for this their conſcience toward God) both in their goods and libertie, if your Majeſtie will give way to them; wherein they pretend your Majeſties ſervice, and that they doe but

1 Anno 1609. An Humble Supplication.

but your will. So that it is your good Grace onely that under God can help us, and give us ſecuritie from ſuch (we truſt) undeſerved evills. Many things induce us to preſume thus into your Majeſties preſence, and to be in all humble ſubmiſſiō ſuters to your Majeſtie for this ſingular grace from you. Yea, many reaſons, and ſtrong inforcements (as it were) doe move us hereunto, which we beſeech your Majeſtie graciouſly to heare. Firſt, ſeeing this is the eſſentiall order in the Goſpell of the viſible churches of Chriſt, which we follow: if he have ſet any order of ſpirituall government at all in the Goſpell, which we verily believe he hath. And then wee beſeech your Majeſtie graciouſly to conſider, how can it be poſſible but that (for Chriſts glory and honour, and out of neceſſary obedience and duetie to him) we ought to walke in it, and humbly ſue to your Highnes for peace therein, as here at this preſent in all ſubmiſſion and lowlineſſe we doe. *Secondly*, Becauſe this we perceive that the perill of our ſoules lyeth hereon.

How

must we therefore choose but with all diligence and dutifull affection seeke at your Majesties gracious hands this bounty towards us, which surpasses all other benefites which in this world you can yield us. *Thirdly*, Forasmuch as the contrary way unto us, the way of the L. Bishops and their followers, is such as giveth great, and most apparant advantage to the papacie & Church of Rome, and which leadeth many in this land directly thither backe againe; partly for that there is in the New Testament much more shew and colour for a universall Church visible indued with governmēt, then for a Nationall or Provinciall Church independent, as this in England now is: partly also because they openly professe that all the ministeries in England are by succession † derived and received essentially from the Pope, which indeed in their estate they cannot will, nor choose but so acknowledge. Therefore considering this, what hearte can sustaine the due griefe, sorrowe & shame of this slander, of this dishonour to God,

† *Fr. Mason of the Consecration of Bb. Anno 1614.*

of triumph and laughing to Antichriſt, of reproch to our land, wherein wee for our partes can bringe no other remedie, but our prayers to God for the generall good, and moſt humble requeſts to your Highnes for mercie herein toward our ſelves. *Fourthly*, for as much as if we ſhould deny this our faith, and violate our conſcience, and turne backe with them to the way of deriving the miniſteric ſucceedingly from Rome, we are terrified with the very cogitation hereof: not onely in that this would argue in us breach of faith toward God, and damnable levitie in our conſcience, but alſo we behold a fearfull ſentence in the law of our land againſt all which ſo ſay and affirme. Avoyding therefore this perplexitie and danger, we have no way to ſerve God truely in, but this which here we profeſſe. And therefore cannot but ſeeke your gracious favour in permitting us with quietnes to enjoye the ſame. *Fifthly*, the integrity of our heartes, and loyaltie of our mindes towardes your Highnes Soveraigne power under Chriſt, doth

1 Eliz. 27. 2.

doth animate us to looke toward your Clemencie in this our need; whom God hath ordayned to be a nourſing father, and defender to all the religious profeſſors of the Goſpell among your ſubjects. And therefore we crave of your Highnes hercin to be good unto us. In what particular? That you would afford us, and aſſigne to us ſome Civill Magiſtrate or Magiſtrates qualifyed with wiſdome, learning, and vertue to be (under your Highnes) our overſeers for our more peaceable, orderly, and dutifull cariage of our ſelves, both in our worſhipping God, and in all other our affaires, at your pleaſure; To whom with all readineſſe and ſubjection we are willing to be accomptable and anſwerable alwayes. We have none under *Ieſus Chriſt* in our wants and diſtreſſes to have recourſe unto, but to your protection and goodnes at all times. Yea whether we obteyne mercy at your Majeſties hands, or no: Nevertheleſſe ſtill to you doe we apply; your grace we doe and will attend. And ſo together wee offer with all willing-

des to receive the oath of your Supremacie, and that of Alleagiance likewise.

Sixtly, Your Majestie heretofore discovered on occasion your tender pitty and commiseration towards the consciences of your subjects, and those being such as more resist your royall dignitie, then wee (through Gods grace) ever have, shall, or can doe by the tenour of our open profession, which also your Majesties † Tortus Lyes. 4. wisdome it selfe † doth well discerne. Yet towards those your subjectes (the Catholikes) in your Kingly affection & ‡ Apol. p. 4. Clemencie you have signified that ‡ you intend no persecution against them for ‖ p. 60. conscience cause, and that ‖ you never said any thing to the charge of any for cause of conscience. This giveth us to have great hope and confidence, and to comfort our selves upon the same your royall word. And therefore also we adventure, to be suters to your *Highnes* in this our need, as now we are, for the due and sweete effecte hereof towards us. Some perhaps will object, that we will not be content with our conscience to

ourselves; but also we use meeting in private for the exercise of our religion? We answer, our religion hath no manner of evill in it any manner of wayes, as by our fore rehearsed Confession is made manifest before, *thanks be to God*. And for meeting in private, it is not that we desire or delight in, the Lord knoweth. The publike places with peace and protection under your *Highnes*, would be in this world the greatest blessing and benefite, which our heart desireth, or which could come unto us. But we dare not expect, neither doe we ask so great favour at your Majesties handes, onely that in private peaceably we might serve God with cleare and quiet consciences according to the effect of our fore remembred Confession, we in all lowlinesse craue but your Toleration. For meetings of a Congregation to the joint and common exercise of Gods worship are necessary partes of religion, and duties in conscience, as being Christes very ordinance and commandement. Your Majesties wisdome understandeth perfectly that

without such meetings, cõmon prayers, and other actes of religion in a Congregation, God neither is nor can be serued, as he ought to be. Wherefore this duty we cannot in any safety of conscience relinquish, or neglect, neither can our meeting thus (onely in a competent Cõgregation) any way in the least measure be prejudiciall or suspicious to your *Highnes* peace or dignitie. But by Gods grace you (yeelding us this fauour) shall every way succeede to the aduancing of Gods true glory, and your Maiesties flourishing government here, and hereafter to your more sure attayning of immortall honour, and soules health. &c. These causes therefore (ô Gracious and Magnificent King) constraine us, and binde us to implore this your fauour and succor at this time, in this behalfe. And so being not ignorant of your gentle and gracious clemencie many times shewed to sundry persons on sundry occasions of no such importance as this is to our poore soules, and (as we judge) to the cleerer demonstration of your eternall

happinesse

happineſſe to come; we lay downe our cauſe at your *Highnes* feete, and thus commend our moſt humble ſuite to your gracious and mercifull conſideration. Beſeeching the Almightie to bleſſe and to honour your excellent Majeſtie, & your royall poſteritie, with all the ornamẽts of Grace in this life, & of everlaſting ſalvatiõ hereafter through

Ieſus Chriſt

Amen.